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Section I

Faculty Development: Past, Present, Future

If the faculty development enterprise is to maintain its health and vigor through this decade and into the next century, its practitioners and caretakers must not only address present needs, but also prepare for the future—in part by studying the past. Tunnel vision and near-sightedness spell doom to a field whose success depends so heavily upon its ability to quickly and effectively meet the changing needs of the professoriate. Thus, as faculty development professionals we are called upon not only to serve as counselors and facilitators, but also as historians and visionaries. We must study our brief, but rich, history to avoid making the mistakes of the past, and we must wisely extrapolate from present conditions to successfully meet the challenges of the future.

The three articles comprising Section I deal with where we have been, where we are, and where we might (or should) be going. In his article, “What Theories Underlie the Practice of Faculty Development?,” Wilbert J. McKeachie begins with a look at the theories forming the foundation of faculty development when it emerged as a field in the early 1960’s, and ends with a peek into the future, suggesting that tomorrow’s theories will probably focus on such matters as “interpersonal and social-psychological aspects of learning,” discipline-specific approaches to teaching-learning, motivation issues, “human-technology combinations,” and the relationship between institutional culture and the classroom.

Joan North, in her inspiring POD keynote address, “Faculty Vitality: 1990 and Beyond,” states that the key to a bright future for faculty development is a holistic approach in which faculty wellness and “institutional quality of life” are stressed. Included in her message is the cautionary note

that care-giving professionals such as faculty developers must tend to their own wellness if they hope to maintain the requisite energy needed to nurture the personal and professional lives of their colleagues.

G. Roger Sell and Nancy V. Chism's "Finding the Right Match: Staffing Faculty Development Centers," closes the Section with an important reminder: the faculty development beacon will continue to shine brightly into the future only if faculty development centers are staffed with dedicated and competent professionals. Both practical and hortatory, "Finding the Right Match" provides sound advice for those administrators responsible for locating and hiring professional staff for offices of faculty and instructional development.